

KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

WINTER 2022/2023



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NOTES FROM THE TRAILHEAD

Do you ever wonder why it's so hard to follow through on new year resolutions? Resolving to make change is one of the hardest things a person can do and humans generally have an aversion to change. Change doesn't happen overnight—first you have to decide to do something (or not do something), and then take the steps needed to actually get the result that you want.

When we want to personally change something about ourselves, we have to go beyond just changing behavior, but also put effort toward changing your skill set in addition to your mindset. When we look to change structural or institutional systems, the required change may rely on policy, government, societal pressures, and ideological norms. In the conservation work of KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper, our resolve—our determination to make change—relies both on our longstanding commitment to the Klamath-Siskiyou and Rogue Basin, along with a vision for adaptability and resilience in the face of climate change.

In this issue of the KS News, we update you on directions our programs are taking in the coming year. As with much of our work, the resolve to do something may not be enough to make change necessary for protection and restoration. You'll recognize that many of our program's campaigns are multi-year projects, taking new turns depending on election cycles and political agency. Sometimes making change in

KS Wild's mission is to protect and restore wild nature in the Klamath-Siskiyou region of southwest Oregon and northwest California.

We promote science-based land and water conservation through policy and community action.

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resolution

noun

1. a firm decision to do or not to do something.

2. the quality of being determined or resolute.

3. the action of solving a problem, dispute, or contentious matter.

our society begins small and takes time. Our programs are discerning and deliberate when it comes to choosing focus—not only do we want to win, but we want to ensure the greatest impact from the outcome. For instance, Forest Watch continues to push back against the Bureau of Land Management’s “Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)” policy of logging old-growth forests and increasing fire hazard to communities. When we win against the BLM’s bad timber policy, like we did in challenging their Poor Windy timber sale, it forces them to change tactics and change outcomes.

Making real and lasting change relies on the support of people like you, and our work depends on the resolve and determination of individuals who raise concern, push back on agency decisions, and use the power of the process—through voting, comment periods, and public pressure—to elevate and illuminate issues. There is no part of our story that doesn’t rely on you—our supporters, our community, and our advocates.

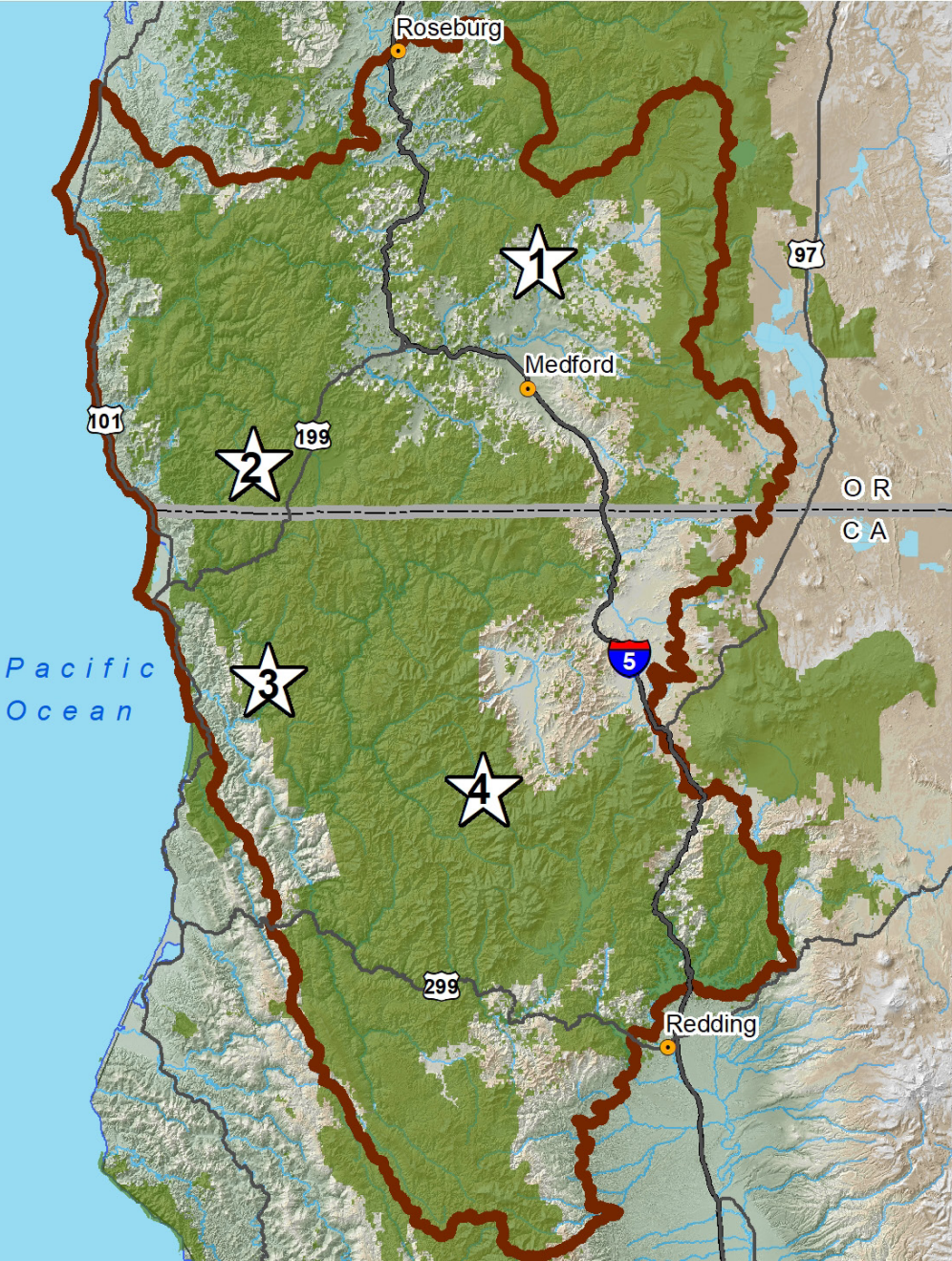
Also in this issue, you can read about KS Wild’s Change Team, our staff committee focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Formed in late 2020, the Change Team has been addressing the need for increased initiatives around DEI within the conservation community.

Another definition of resolution is the conclusion of something—the end of the story. After nearly four years with KS Wild, my time has come to move on from this organization and this is the last newsletter that I am producing as Communications Director. I have a lifelong commitment to the protection of land, wildlife, and water conservation, and it has been an honor to serve the Klamath-Siskiyou community, where I will continue to love where I live, and defend what I love.

Jessica Klinke served as Communications Director for KS Wild since 2019.

KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper acknowledge that we work on the ancestral lands of Native tribes that lived and still live in what we call the Klamath-Siskiyou region. We thank the original caretakers of this land and we recognize our privilege in benefiting from these stolen lands. We encourage action as a way to honor, support, and stand in solidarity with present day Tribes.

CONSERVATION SUCCESS IN THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU



Long-term conservation efforts are the backbone of KS Wild & Rogue Riverkeeper's work. Here are four examples of projects in each of our key program areas that bring lasting protections to the Klamath-Siskiyou region.

1. LNG PIPELINE - (ROGUE RIVERKEEPER)

The massive Jordan Cove gas terminal and associated Pacific Connector pipeline was finally stopped for good in late 2021. The Liquefied Natural Gas project would have damaged the Rogue River and adjacent waterways to transport gas through southern Oregon to be shipped overseas. The “No LNG” campaign against the project began nearly 20 years ago and gave rise to the Rogue Riverkeeper Program in 2009. Today, Rogue Riverkeeper works to protect and restore clean water, native fish, and healthy communities throughout the Rogue Basin. In collaboration with other conservation groups, local landowners, and Tribal entities ***we stopped the pipeline!***

2. KALMIOPSIS WILD RIVERS - (SPECIAL PLACES)

Mining is one of the gravest threats to watersheds and biodiversity in the Klamath Siskiyou, and our Special Places Program works to ensure long-term conservation where-ever it is needed in the region. In 2011, KS Wild and community members secured a 20 year moratorium on nickel strip mining in the Baldface, Rough & Ready, and Hunter Creek watersheds in SW Oregon. But the moratorium needs to be made permanent by Congress. Both the US House and Senate have recently held hearings for the permanent mineral withdrawal, which is now included in the Oregon Recreation Enhancement Act. This is a critical step leading up to a Senate and House vote. ***Fingers crossed that this bill passes.***

3. SIX RIVERS FIRE AND FUELS - (CLIMATE PROGRAM)

KS Wild is deeply involved in the development of the forest resiliency projects throughout the region, including the Six Rivers Fire and Fuels Project. Our Climate Program was launched in 2018 to help guide climate smart conservation in the region. We are involved in collaborative efforts throughout the Applegate, Illinois Valley, and northern California, and are working with partners to develop both long term policies and on-the-ground projects that safeguard our forests and communities. The Six Rivers project has the potential to be an example of where strategic management and the use of controlled and Cultural fire will enhance forest resiliency. ***We'll keep working for a climate resilient region.***

4. RIVER COMPLEX SALVAGE - (FOREST WATCH)

KS Wild's ForestWatch Program monitors eight million acres of public land in the Klamath-Siskiyou. It is at the heart of KS Wild's mission of defending the forests, waterways, and wildlife of the region. We are often the last line of defense to hold federal timber planners accountable when they propose to harm public forests. Recently, following nearly every wildfire, the Klamath National Forest proposes post-fire logging in otherwise protected forests. The River Complex logging project is the latest. It is located in the Salmon and Scott River Watersheds near the beloved Trinity-Alps Wilderness. ForestWatch will continue to protect majestic old-growth and sensitive post-fire forests and watersheds from irresponsible logging, mining, and road building plans. ***We keep an eagle eye on public forests.***

FORESTWATCH: Q&A

Q:
WHAT THE HECK IS "INTEGRATED
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT?"

A:
ANOTHER BLM LOGGING SCHEME
TARGETING OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

Some timber advocates within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) simply cannot abide the idea that there are old-growth forests designated as protected "Late Successional Reserves" on public lands. So, they've designed a new scheme called "Integrated Vegetation Management" to target Late Successional Reserves for logging. While the Medford BLM District continues to propose old-growth timber sales throughout southwest Oregon in stands designated as the "Harvest Land Base" they now also have their sights set on logging the Late Successional Reserves that were set aside to provide old-growth wildlife habitat.

"OPEN-SERAL" MEANS CLEARCUTS

Through the Integrated Vegetation Management timber program the BLM intends to convert existing late-successional forests located in Late Successional Reserves into "open seral" stands devoid of forest tree canopy cover- in other words the timber sales are designed to eliminate forest canopy cover. One wonders what the point of a Late Successional Reserve is if the BLM refuses to protect and retain late-successional forests located within the so-called reserves.



Old-growth forests proposed for logging and road construction in the Late Mungers Late Successional Reserve timber sale.



THE LATE MUNGERS AND PENN BUTTE TIMBER SALES

The first Medford District BLM IVM timber sales out of the gates are located in the Williams Late Successional Reserve (above the community of Williams.) To access these old-growth stands, one must drive through thousands of acres of extremely dense second-growth timber plantations on both private and BLM lands that surround the homes and community in the Williams Valley. The vast network of tree plantations that could carry wildfire into the Valley are not proposed for treatment as part of the Late Mungers and Penn Butte timber sales. Instead, BLM timber planners are targeting old-growth forests in the Late Successional Reserves away from town for conversion into “open seral” stands devoid of tree cover. Some of the “gap creation” logging prescriptions will result in clearcuts larger than two football fields in size.

CUTTING THE PUBLIC OUT OF PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT

The primary point of the IVM logging scheme is for BLM timber planners to avoid environmental analysis and public participation when planning old-growth timber sales in the Late Successional Reserve land use allocation. Instead of revealing the impacts of the proposed logging on wildlife habitat, watershed values and fire hazard through documentation in an Environmental Assessment, BLM timber planners will instead issue a “Determination of NEPA Adequacy” which consists of an internal checklist that need not be subject to public involvement.

PUTTING THE BRAKES ON ILLEGAL LOGGING

The BLM’s attempt to insulate its Late Successional Reserve old-growth logging program from environmental analysis and public input is counterproductive. While many in the Forest Service are embracing public involvement and collaboration to strengthen public lands management, the BLM is stuck in a paradigm of its own making in which agency timber planners try to cut every corner in order to log late-successional forests. It is extremely unlikely that federal courts are going to go along with the BLM’s proposal to convert lands designated as old-growth reserves into “open seral” clearcuts.

We believe that BLM public lands management would benefit from more public involvement not less. There is a widespread desire among many of the BLM’s neighbors to work together to protect forest and watershed values in the region. Unfortunately, the IVM old-growth logging program makes it clear that BLM timber planners still don’t see the forest for the trees.

George Sexton is KS Wild's Conservation Director

LOOKING AHEAD WITH ROGUE RIVERKEEPER

Rogue Riverkeeper looks ahead to the new year working to protect water quality and healthy aquatic ecosystems for the Rogue basin in the following areas:

MONITORING JET BOAT DREDGING

Ongoing impacts of drought and climate change are affecting the Rogue basin and activities here in a variety of ways. Jet boats that formerly passed through sections of the river easily are now having problems doing so. Dredging to allow for improved access, particularly by large commercial jet boats, can potentially cause harm to the river and aquatic ecosystems, violating Oregon's water quality standards on several fronts. Rogue Riverkeeper's goal is to protect water quality and aquatic habitat through enforcement of the Clean Water Act permits. When an individual or company wishes to engage in activities that may damage water quality, they need a permit to do so, thus ensuring that there is review and comment by the public regarding the proposed activity. Those applying for permits are required to demonstrate that the impact to the waterway has been considered and will not damage the resource significantly. Changing regulations, such as reducing speed limits on jet boats, is another way to reduce the impact of wave action from these craft.



OREGON FOREST PRACTICES ACT REFORM & RULEMAKING

In May 2022, Governor Brown signed the Private Forest Accord (PFA), an historic agreement between environmental organizations and the timber industry that transforms riparian forest management and improves aquatic habitat on 10 million acres of private industrial forestland across Oregon. In southwest Oregon, more than 1 million acres are impacted by the PFA. There are new no-spray buffers near water sources, expanded no-cut buffers along fish-bearing streams, and important conservation incentives for private forestland owners to protect beavers and beaver habitat. But now that the PFA has been signed, the reform measures included in the Accord must be implemented. The Accord was just the first step in actually improving practices and conditions from those that have historically caused harm to waterways and riparian forests. It will be through the development of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and rules guiding practices that will benefit the natural systems and the landscape. Rogue Riverkeeper is working with Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife staff as well as partner organizations to develop the HCP and the rules that will govern private forest management going forward.

URBAN TRIBUTARY DEFENSE



A challenge in protecting sources of cold water habitat for salmonids is when they are located in the urban and built environment. As development in our region continues, smaller water resources such as small streams, springs, and wetlands are encroached upon and negatively impacted. In the town of Phoenix, Rogue Riverkeeper is working with community members in an effort to protect some small unnamed streams in the area. These streams seem to be spring fed and are a source of cold water, even in the summer.

The different municipalities and jurisdictions making up the greater Rogue Valley each have their own ordinances for riparian and water resource protection, some of which are not followed, even by their own planning departments. As the US Supreme Court is now hearing a case

that may reduce the protections of small waterways by the Clean Water Act, local planning and development decisions will need to be monitored if we seek to protect water resources and riparian areas that are particularly vulnerable to urban development.

Resilience in face of climate change will require us to step up to protect what sustains us. Can we resolve to continue to work to keep aquatic ecosystems in the Rogue basin viable and resilient into the future?

Frances Oyung is Rogue Riverkeeper's Program Director



CHEERS TO 50 YEARS!

Thank you to everyone who participated during our month of action celebrating 50 years of the Clean Water Act. Your support during this time marks an important commitment to clean water in the Rogue River and beyond, for present day and future generations.

Our work is more meaningful when you join us as we fight to protect clean water and native fish for all communities in the Rogue Basin.



Since KS Wild's Climate Program was launched in 2019 to address the threat of climate change to the region, we've been busy helping shape climate and conservation policy for the region in the face of climate change. Here is a snapshot of some of our recent activity.

OLD-GROWTH CAMPAIGN

This April, the Biden Administration announced an Executive Order to protect older forests, including the mature and old-growth forests here in the Pacific Northwest. This is a major step forward in KS Wild's campaign to protect forests and fight climate change! Throughout this campaign and with the help of KS Wild members, we have sent in over 600 comments to the US Forest Service detailing why our older forests deserve protections, over 100 postcards to the Biden Administration, and have sent dozens of hand written letters to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Climate Program will continue to apply pressure to make sure the Biden Administration creates durable policies to permanently protect our remaining mature and old-growth forests.

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE

KS Wild's Climate Program staff have been engaging with federal land managers, Oregon Department of Forestry personnel, and southern Oregon community members to push for better wildfire policies at the state and federal level. We are advocating for "good use" of prescribed fire and indigenous cultural burning, and implementation of climate-smart forestry. We have distributed over 500 copies of our Forest & Fire Toolkit, a resource on how to prepare for wildfire, and plan to create an updated version. We plan to continue supporting local communities in adapting to a future with wildfire by tracking and helping direct investments that are flowing into the region through Senate Bill 762 and Federal climate and infrastructure spending bills.

Alexi Lovechio is KS Wild's Forest & Climate Coordinator



CLIMATE PROGRAM

THE PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD

Our climate team invested over 1,000 hours in the development of the Private Forest Accord over the past two years, and it paid off when the accord was passed by the Oregon Legislature and new rules were adopted by the Board of Forestry. The accord reshapes how streamside forests are managed across 10 million acres of private forest land. There is still more work to be done as the Board will take up the issue of managing these forests after wildfire, which is currently a giant loophole in Oregon's forest rules. Wildfires are certain to become more common with climate change and we need to ensure water quality and salmon habitat is protected, even after a wildfire.

OREGON NATURAL & WORKING LANDS ADVISORY GROUP

Our Climate Director Joseph Vaile was recently appointed to the Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Advisory Committee to provide help in informing the implementation of the Oregon Global Warming Commission's NWL goals. NWL is a name for forests, grasslands, rangelands, farmlands, wetlands, and open spaces. NWLs produce many benefits, including the ability to capture and store carbon to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. This is especially true of forests that store vast amounts of carbon. Oregon has goals to increase the amount of carbon NWL capture and store and the advisory council could help shape state-wide NWL programs and policies.

OREGON NATURAL & WORKING LANDS ADVISORY GROUP

Our climate program was appointed to an advisory group to help develop Oregon's 20-year landscape resiliency strategy. This strategy is an outgrowth of the comprehensive wildfire bill known as Senate Bill 762. This strategy will be used to prioritize restoration actions and geographies for wildfire risk reduction and will be used to direct federal, state, and private investments. This is a huge opportunity to ensure that the investments are coordinated, go to the right places, and equitably address the wildfire threat to both communities and landscapes.

Joseph Vaile is KS Wild's Climate Director

CHANGE TEAM

INITIATIVES IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

In recent years, KS Wild has taken steps to address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within our organization. Recognizing that conservation groups, including KS Wild, are historically and presently dominated by white men, and reflect power dynamics embedded in inequities of race, class, gender, and sexuality, KS Wild partnered with Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) to help develop the Change Team, a committee made up of staff members to engage with diversity, equity and inclusion at every level of the organization.

The Change Team is designed to disrupt power structures that have traditionally dominated conservation movements, allowing for a more transformative space that incorporates diversity, equity, and inclusion into the systems and structure of the organization.

The Change Team is creating new pathways for the organization to develop and embed equitable and inclusive practices, and for staff to increase their cultural competence with working across differences. These changes create the conditions for diversity to thrive and help guide our decision-making processes, organizational policy and procedures, community engagement, and use of resources. By creating a more equitable, inclusive culture, our goal is for community members, officials, leadership, and staff to feel equally heard and valued in their roles and interactions with KS Wild.

Over the last two years, the Change Team developed a variety of goals aimed at revising both internal and public-facing structures to create a more inclusive, equitable and feedback-rich culture. They revised the new hire on-boarding process, developed land acknowledgements, an Indigenous resource page on the website, and stipend agreements for BIPOC community members. They worked toward more accessibility at events with closed captioning on online webinars and pay-what-you-can options for ticketed events. Alongside staff, the Change Team also co-created a set of guiding principles that you will see us roll out next year.



Jessica Klinke served as Communications Director and founding co-chair of the Change Team.



ON TOUR

WITH KS WILD &
ROGUE RIVERKEEPER

KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper present the Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour & Raffle Friday, March 10, 2023 — an evening of short films showcasing our earth's natural wonders and the amazing stories of activists working to conserve the environment.

21st Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival & Raffle

Live. Virtual. Awesome.

March 10, 2023

Raffle begins on February 10, 2023 and runs up until the event.

Tickets go on sale at www.siskiyoufilmfest.org on January 15th.

This year we are offering a live-streamed show from the comfort of your own home. Don't miss our awe-inspiring lineup of the year's best conservation and adventure films and raffle your way for a chance to win!

Make a donation when registering for our virtual event to begin or renew your KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper joint membership and be entered into our prize package giveaway!

*100% of proceeds support our conservation efforts in the
Klamath-Siskiyou and Rogue River Basin!*

www.siskiyoufilmfest.org

GIVE TO THE WILD

In the coming year, KS Wild will be partnering with FreeWill.com to take the guess-work out of estate planning and bequests. FreeWill specializes in democratizing estate planning. What exactly does that mean?

Over 70% of adults in the United States do not have any kind of will. This lack of planning can leave families and loved ones scrambling when someone passes and removes the opportunity to leave a bequest supporting the causes and issues that were important to you during your life. We want to encourage our supporters to leave a legacy for the wildlands, wildlife, and waterways by including KS Wild in your will. Our permanent protection campaigns have given rivers 'Wild and Scenic' designation and helped turn vulnerable Bureau of Land Management areas into National Monuments. By making KS Wild a beneficiary in your will, you can make these types of campaigns your legacy for the planet and underwrite the difficult work that KS Wild does to get the job done. Although I can't promise that congress will name anything after you!

This new year, as you make your personal resolutions, consider developing your will and adding bequests to KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper. If you need inspiration or support, check out FreeWill.com as a potential no-cost tool to help you with that process.

If you're considering making a bequest to KS Wild or Rogue Riverkeeper, or have any questions about planned giving, stock gifts, or sustaining contributions, please contact Development Office Isaak Oliansky at isaak@kswild.org.



Join KS Wild and American River Touring Association (ARTA) for 5 days along the Rogue Trail with raft support and delicious meals.

For more information:
www.kswild.org/events

ROGUE RIVER TRAIL RAFT-SUPPORTED HIKE

MAY 2023





WINTER EVENTS

Snowshoe the Upper Rogue **Saturday, February 25th, 2023**

Join KS Wild staffers on a scenic snowshoe amongst old-growth forests in the beautiful Upper Rogue River. This will be a Bring Your Own Gear event, so please consider securing snowshoes and appropriate gear by this date. Snowshoe rentals can be found at Black Bird in Medford. Sign up on the website to receive exact time and route information.

Bike along Elk Creek the dam that did not happen

Saturday, March 4th, 2023, 11:00am-4:00pm

Rogue Riverkeeper's Program Director Frances Oyung invites you to join her on this "bring your own bike" event that will take you ~10 miles out & back along Elk Creek, the site of what had been a planned reservoir in the Upper Rogue near Trail, OR. Riders of all ages are welcome if capable of covering the distance on an old road (now closed to vehicles) with broken pavement and gravel in spots, and some elevation gain. Mountain or off-road bikes/tires will be best for this surface. We will ride on the old Elk Creek road through oak woodlands and former pastures along the floodplain, have lunch (BYO) and take a few stops to talk about the history of the Elk Creek dam project, current and proposed management issues, native fish, and other watershed values. If weather cancels this event, the backup date will be March 11th.

Once you sign-up online you will receive more details including carpooling locations and what to bring.

**More events and information:
www.kswild.org/events**



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Cover: Winter view of Mt Shasta from the Siskiyou Crest. Photo Credit: Barbara Cornnes